THE FEMALE PEDANT:

A

FARCE OF TWO ACTS.

By THOMAS HORDE, jun. Esq.

AT THE

Grammar School in Stow, Glouceſterſhire;

AUTHOR OF

LEANDER AND HERO,—and ZELIDA; TRAGEDIES.

DAMON AND PHEBE; AN OPERA.

DRAMATIC LOVE,——DISAPPOINTED VILLAINY,——THE EMPERICK,—AS THE WORLD GOES,—PARADISE OF FOOLS,——PRETENDED PURITAN,——IT WAS RIGHT AT THE LAST,—And THE WHIMSICAL SERENADE.

Hanc, ego quæ repetit, volvitq; Palæmonis Artem ~~Odi,~~
Servata ſemper lege, et Ratione loquendi,
Ignotoſq; mihi tenet Antiquaria Verſus. JUV.

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MDCCLXXXII.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Colonel LOVEWELL, in Love with Sylvia.

THRIVER, in Love with Lucrece.

Sir MARK FOIBLE, in Love with Lucrece.

Lord COUNTERFEIT, a Pretender to Sylvia.

WOMEN.

Lady LOFTY.

SYLVIA, her Daughter.

LUCRECE, her Niece.

ALICE.

PROLOGUE.

VARIOUS the Protean Arts, from day to day,
That Authors uſe to introduce a Play.
Many attack in Military Form,
To ſeize your Hearts, as Soldiers ſeize by Storm;
And to the Onſet with a Prologue come,
A fierce Alarm—in Lieu of Trump and Drum.
Others, like Pleaders that can twiſt the Laws,
Varniſh with Sophiſtry a dubious Cauſe:
Or to acquire th' Affection of the Town,
With Flatt'ry ſeaſon'd, force their Olio down;
And, from their better Judgment, Mercy crave,
While each ſubſcribes himſelf, your humble Slave.

Theſe are the Cobweb-Tricks and Baits to thrive,
Of thoſe that write and keep the Preſs alive;
Or to the Theatre Productions bring,
And croud the Levee of a Stage-proud King:

But no ſuch Schemes our Poet has in View,
*Above their Hiſtory and Fable too *;*
For, leſt the public Palate ſhould be cloy'd,
He here preſents his Miſtreſs unenjoy'd;
Yet take not this his Word—The Reaſons why,
Bards for a Dinner often tell a Lie.

* Young's Revenge.

Here, without Prejudice, behold her now,
If Violation, Luſt, diſgrace her Brow;
If ſickly Vice, with all her tainted Crew,
Degrade her Banners with a baneful Hue;
In juſtice let ſuch Guilt Diſdain create,
And Hemp and Mallet be the Harlot's Fate.
But, oh! if in her undiſſembled Mind,
Clear Traces of Penelope *you find;*
If, when inſpected, all her Actions prove
Fit Orgies to adorn Diana's *Grove,*
May ev'ry Hand impartial, Might and Main,
Plaud to that Echo that applauds again *.

* Macbeth.

THE

THE FEMALE PEDANT.

ACT I.

SCENE,—*The Public Walks in* Cambridge.

Enter Thriver.

Thriver.

" GOLD ſow'd the world with ev'ry ill,
" Gold taught the murd'rous ſword to kill."

Very ſingular poetry.—I am inclined to think my friend, Mr. Gay, neither conſpicuous as a Fabuliſt, or Dramatic Writer; at leaſt it was not profeſſionally lucrative, when he wrote theſe lines. But, however, when we cannot obtain what we wiſh to poſſeſs, we find ſometimes a pleaſing relief in inveighing againſt the virtue or utility of it.

Enter Col. Lovewell.

So, Colonel, you ſtick true to old Humpback Richard's military precept; " Be ſtirring with the Lark, good Norfolk."

Col. Ay; but not to riſk this ſweet perſon in the battle of Boſworth, I aſſure thee.

Thriv. There I'll take thee upon credit.—It was the old ſchool boy's beaten declamatory theſis, *omnia vincit amor.*

Col. You pay your club into the ſame meſs, or I'm highly out in my calculation. On with your line, ſir, and make it a compleat Hexameter.—*Nos et cedamus amori.* This is language well adapted to the place. But what, in the name of amazement, drew either of us within the muſty precincts of a college?

Thriv. Why, love threw out his luſcious bait to allure us to the taſſel.—You purſued the golden Lady Lofty; I her ſoul-devouring niece, Lucrece.

Col. And a very promiſing vagary it is likely to end! As for myſelf, I am thrown out of the chace. As I was neither a votary, nor a queriſt at the fane of her pedantry, ſhe has transferred her good will to one of the ſenior fellows, who courts her in mood, tenſe, number, and perſon; and never addreſſes her in any other terms than in thoſe which other women would deem incomprehenſible.

Thriv. And, Lucrece, as my finances are not adequate to her own vanity, is ſuch an inſolent coquette, that tho' I could be always with her, yet I dread to battle with her, as a criminal in Newgate ſhudders at the knell of St. Sepulchre. But what the deuce ſignifies prattling about wedlock, or intrigue. Having too free acceſs to a fine favourite of my father's, and it ending by the courſe of nature, as moſt of thoſe unlucky amours frequently do, I was diſcarded with a paltry ſum of five hundred pounds, till more grace, and wealth in abundance, were by ſome means acquired, to qualify me for the ſight of a parent.

Col. Ha! who, for Heavens, with a frippery, mincing gait, twirls his voluble, pantomime limbs this way?—The ſame identical, inſignificant apology for a cypher. The quinteſſence of elder brothers, and nominal ſtudents, after the modern faſhion.

Enter

Enter Sir Mark Folble.

Sir Mark. Monſieurs, Je baizer l'mains. This curſed bell with its unmannerly tingle, has ſummoned me to my devotion, when my eyes gave items for a dormitory. If we miſs attendance but two mornings, there is ſaddled on us a Greek *impoſition*; but they are no judges themſelves of the matter, and, I think, I may as well ſend it up in Welch or Italian.

Col. I thought your fellows of colleges were all men of letters?

Sir Mark. No more, ſir, than that every itinerant comedian is a Garrick. A new conceit, by Jupiter! but my imagination was in flames, and it bounced from me like a cheſnut from the reeking embers.

Thriv. A moſt incomparable puppy! [*Aſide.*]—But pray, Sir Mark, how flouriſhes your amour with Lucrece?

Sir Mark. Why, wafting on the plumage of a zephir.

Thriv. And at laſt ſettling on the promontory of wedlock.

Sir Mark. No trout out of that piſcatory, I beſeech you. I am not ſo unacquainted with life, to make love to any woman I ever intend to marry.

Col. But have you no other end to anſwer in purſuit of Lucrece, but that of a dangler?

Sir Mark. Something more, pon honour, I confeſs; for I have propoſed to intrigue, romp, and ſleep with every fair creature in the circuit.

Col. Chaſtely reſolved, and, by the rule of Trony, a Cynic.

Sir Mark. [*Aſide.*] The name of a new jeſt book, I ſuppoſe. But hark'ee, Colonel. There is a piece of novelty, which I ſuppoſe has not as yet raviſhed your ears. Does not the echo of a favoured rival, with a title and apparatus, ſound delightfully in them?

Col. As to that Sir Mark, I am as yet to learn.

Sir Mark. And ſo am I.—But it is famed that he is an Iriſh Peer, and come to bereave you of your miſtreſs.

But ſoft;—there is again the plaguy tingle to prayers, and I'm obliged to tramp, like a choriſter to ſing his matins. It is frightfully hard, that a man of my figure muſt be ſconced or impoſed, if he does not leave his friends to attend the ſervice of a church.

Thriv. As it is a circumſtance, Sir Mark, of ſuch ſingular emergency, the lenity of your friends will excuſe you.

Sir Mark. Why, 'tis only a curſory ſtop indeed;—a mere ſauntering how-d'ye do. But I am a very excentric planet; and except when I gallant the ladies, I am entirely wandering from my ſphere. [*Exit.*

Thriv. A trietal ſtick of wood, and likely to come to ſomething conſiderable in this ſweet fertile ſoil. But prithee, friend, haſt thou received any innuendo as to this rival of thine?

Col. Lord Counterfeit, I ſuſpect; the hovering inſect that fluttered round at every watering place ſhe went to laſt ſeaſon. But talk of Satan and you ſnuffle his brimſtone directly.

Enter Lord Counterfeit.

Lord Count. Mr. Thriver, your everlaſting vaſſal! What, Col. Lovewell! it ſurpaſſes my moſt ſanguine hopes to meet two of my warmeſt friends, on my entrance into the univerſity.

Thriv. We had little reaſon to expect a man of your Lordſhip's flaſh and breeding, in the muſty ſchool of pedantry. But what has attracted your Lordſhip from the airy precincts of gaiety and faſhionable company?

Lord Count. Why, nothing leſs than great almighty love. The roſy Sylvia has more attraction, than a whole creation of Seraphs. I think Colonel you are no ſtranger to that lady?

Col. I never, my Lord, ſhall ſhall deny my acquaintance with a woman of ſo extenſive deſert.

Lord Count. Then, Colonel, I muſt crave the civility of an introduction; a military patron ſeldom fails us: when

when we attack the citadel ſword in hand, the fortreſs ſurrenders in the conſequence.

Col. Inſufferable coxcomb! I can hardly retain my foot from giving him an unmannerly ſalutation. [*Aſide.*

Thriv. I perceive that the bright ſallies of your Lordſhip's temper are not benumbed by the narcrotic fumes of an intrigue!

Lord Count. Why, no: I conſider the women in the light of my wine; I never take a larger potion of either than my conſtitution can bear. They may both have a heavy effect on a Dutchman; but on a *man au goût dernier* it will produce a moſt clattering eſpirit. The European tour has fanned a flame in my very vitals, to preſide over the affairs of ladies, tho' never over thoſe of a nation; for if I am to be haunted like an old manſion-houſe, I had rather be tortured by the ſhape of an abigail, than a levee-hunter; and, as for Sylvia, I would enter the liſts of wedlock with her, was ſhe clad in the tattered patches of an antique heathen philoſopher.

Col. A palpable ſtory, freſh from the mint, and newly imported from Hibernia. [*Aſide.*]

Thriv. If your Lordſhip is ſo humbly diſpoſed toward the fair ſex, you may ſurely take your choice of abundance.

Lord Count. Ay, friend, but to nab the ſly reynard in the covert, is to loſe the paſtime of purſuit.

Thriv. Your Lordſhip ſeems to conſider matrimony in a very airy and whimſical manner indeed.

Lord Count. I conſider it, man, as the purchaſe of an Arabian mare, barely to keep up the fineneſs and mettle of the breed.

Col. I cannot ſuſtain this frippery a ſingle ſecond longer. [*Aſide.*] My Lord, this way we ſhall have feminine game on the pinion, for yonder walk ſeems like a bed of tulips. My friend will notify, ſeparately as you paſs, each romp and toaſt that is eminent: the

women

women have admired your Lordſhip for theſe two years paſt, and have a right to be gazed on in return.

Thriv. Poor centinel, I'll relieve thee, or I fear thou wilt periſh on thy poſt. [*Aſide.*]

[*Exit.* Lord Counterfeit and Thriver.

Enter Sylvia.

Col. Well, madam, the duty of your toilet being performed, you ſally forth, like a knight errant, quite prepared for the execution of the day.

Sylv. Why, ſir, you ſeem to have the quality of a hound, and trail one by the ſcent. I am ready for any thing you peſter me with, if not of a tender nature. The very hint of the fire of love conſumes me; his arrows will ſtun me with their twang; and his melting ſighs diſperſe my ſoft frame to atoms.

Col. I have matters here, madam, of a more ſolid texture for your meditation. You will peruſe this paper, and anon, I'll return for your ſentiments. [*Exit.*

Sylv. Hum!—Now for inſpection. I ſuppoſe a fulſome panegyrical poem, or ſome new-invented poeſies for a wedding ring. [*Reads.*] "Sir, The perſon who "is at Cambridge on your reception of this, under the "title of Lord Counterfeit, is an impoſtor, and fur-"niſhed with carriage, caſh, &c. by a company of "fortune-hunters, and has a deſign on a lady you have "long paid your addreſſes to, which has occaſioned "this brief admonition from your ſervant, INCOG."

Sylv. My faculties ſeem convulſed, and I ſcarce eſcaped the pit, juſt as I fancied I had near attained the ſummit. But this haſte may be unbecoming. There may be a ſnake in the graſs. It is thyſelf, ſweet Colonel, I'll ſtake my virtue to a ſingle pinch of rappee; and thou art a very rattle-ſnake indeed. But may thoſe darling delights, peculiar to our ſex, never gratify my palate, if I do not nimbly repay you, and that in your own coinage.

Enter

Enter Lucrece.

Lucr. So, couſin madcap, I think laſt night you was heinouſly ſevere on our confined living in the country.

Sylv. Living, my dear!—Drawing the vital air, camelian a la mode: to riſe, becauſe it dawns; and go to bed, becauſe it is a chill evening, and grandmamma has a cold; to ſhudder at the robberies and murders in the weekly papers; and to attend to the cures made by the parſon's wife, by her new-fangled poſſet, or caudle.

Lucr. And by what means do you mettropolitan ladies contrive to endure your exiſtence?

Sylv. To lead the faſhion, and to be like Hymettian bees, alert in every public place of reſort; and tho', ſweet couſin, the demure quaker is depicted on your forehead, the petit dimpled archer has been buſy about your heart; and I deal not with Belzebub, if your accompliſhments have not had a conſiderable influence on the fine Mr. Thriver.

Lucr. And if you did deal with Belzebub, you would ſoon perceive what a conſiderable influence the fine Mr. Thriver has upon me, I'll aſſure you. [*Aſide.*] Why he is a pretty fellow, and has his merit; but if the fetters of matrimony are not trebly gilt, he has often avowed that they are no fetters for him; and as I cannot command my own fortune, he will hardly depend on her ladyſhip.

Sylv. Then again, you have an enamorato in Sir Mark Foible, who has every requiſite for a huſband. His wealth will procure pleaſures, and his folly ſecure you the uſe of them. Such an egregious coxcomb, and ſo fond of himſelf, that he would take no notice if any one elſe was remarkably fond of you; and, if unluckily alone, he might hum a tune of the laſt ballad-opera, and you divert yourſelf with your ſquirrel.—

Lucr. As well calculated for a huſband, as an univerſity proctor for a tumbler.

Enter

Enter Lady Lofty.

Lady Lofty. So girls, you are centrifugal, and act in retrogreſſive motion to your own intereſts! this is a mathematical definition of the debility of your intellectual faculties. Your trifling debates adorn not theſe literary ſeminaries, that, like the ſolar ſyſtem, refracts its genial rays, and illuminates our Britiſh hemiſphere.

Sylv. I was about to deſcribe to my country couſin, my next new birth-day ſuit. Nothing more or leſs than the robe levee, ſaid to be the univerſal rage. It is plain white ſattin, drawn up in the front, and faſtened with taſſels of ſilver; the ſhort wide ſleeves are drawn up near the ſhoulders, with a bunch of diamonds; and a round paſteboard hat, ornamented with an embroidered buckle.

Lady Lofty. A bulky ſorites of accumulated ſplendor and ignorance; a prey to a ſilken whirligig fop, or to an animalcula of blundering commerce. Could the lines of your notions run parallel to the equator of my ambition, I would rivet neither of you to a leſs helpmate than Seneca, the very prince of philoſophers.

Sylv. Except a fellow of one of your muſty colleges, who is as true a philoſopher as Diogenes, and will ſtick as cloſely by the caſk.

Lady Lofty. Thou heterogeneous infidel! thou alien to erudition! when thou ſcoffeſt at theſe venerated ſtructures of irradiating ſcience, there is not a ſolid content in the whole area of my body but trepidates, like the vibration of an earthquake.

Lucr. My country education makes me rather more ſober in my opinion, than my couſin; but rather than be paired with an irreclaimable pedant, I'd be immured in a priſon for life, like an oyſter in its own ſhell.

Lady Lofty. Why the modern race of females are the perpetual motion, as to their tongues; and only mere exhauſted receivers, in reſpect to their vacant heads. I might as well expect an imperfect planet to frame a circular

circular regularity as to its motion or aſpect, as to concenter the volatile animal æther of theſe knowledge-hating damſels, in the ſettled orbit of philoſophy.

Sylv. What a curioſity muſt the wife of a philoſopher be! I never heard but of one that was to be envied; her name was Zantippe, and ſhe carried a deſpotic rule over her huſband. Yet, I'm not ſuch a pagan to your Ladyſhip's ſentiments, but I muſt confeſs there are ſome philoſophers imbibed a doctrine that merits my moſt ſanguine approbation.

Lady Loft. What were their favourite tenets?

Sylv. Why, they taught and recommended ſilence. [*Aſide.*] Eſpecially to elderly ladies. Indeed many of our pedants favour the ſame opinion; for though they talk all day long, they are the ſame as though they held their peace, for they ſeldom ſpeak one word that a plain reaſonable perſon can underſtand.

Lady Loft. Thou alpha of inferiority! thou malignant defamer! this is throwing pearls before a Scythian, who has never heard of a mine, or a jeweller. Had the celebrated Franklin diſcharged his largeſt electric bottle, it could not have given a more rapid, violent ſhock. Come, Lucrece, let us leave, let us leave this ſcientific apoſtate of the primal magnitude; and, oh, may a piercing fluid from that great man's machine concenter her to a point, and not a ſingle twine of ſilk at hand to cut off the communication. [*Exit.* L. Lofty.

Lucr. Indeed, my Lady, I ſhall play the electric eel, and give your Ladyſhip the ſlip. I hardly can tell which is worſt, to be dragged as punctually to your Ridotto's, Cornely's, and other public places, as an exciſeman to a gauging tub; or to be chained to the deſk as conſtantly as a hackney writer, for the ſolution of an Euclid, or Newton.

Enter Colonel Lovewell.

Col. I hope, Madam, that you are now ſatisfied, that you nearly had taken a light guinea in the lieu of ſolid weight;

weight; and that merely Mrs. Such-a-one, is preferable to a nominal title.

Sylv. Bleſs me, Colonel, you are in a prodigious haſte; you ſkip about as briſkly as a ſcalded lamplighter, or a cryer of dying ſpeeches.

Col. Had I continued in office much longer, Madam, I very probably had cried your's; for you was almoſt on the brink of an execution.

Sylv. Come, Colonel, the varniſh of this plan is very thinly ſpread, and may be eaſily wiped off with a feather. You are yet but a young ſchemiſt, and will weave your projects thicker when you next ſit down at the elaborate loom of invention. Ha! ha! ha!

Col. 'Sblood, Madam! do you take me for a travelling droll, or a Jack Pudding, at the beck of every gownſman at Cambridge?

Lucr. Oh, pray keep your temper Colonel; it will be no additional proof of your bravery, to fret and ſtorm, or to draw your ſword upon ladies.

Enter Lord Counterfeit.

My Lord, I have been at war with a regular-trained ſoldier, on your account, and had nearly been made plunder for my pains. This is my allegation of the breach of peace, as you will find by the undermentioned articles. [*Gives him the paper.*

Lord Count. Reads. [*Aſide.*] Why, this is the fifth of November in miniature. Gun-powder treaſon plot. Alack, poor Guy Fawkes! thy whole myſtery will be unravelled. If the ſociety that equipped me, have no better ſucceſs with the reſt of their agents, I fear, they will quickly be bankrupts, and their names among the *Whereas*'s in the London Gazette.—However, ſhe does not appear to credit it, and it is no buſineſs of mine to enquire whether I am a raſcal or not.—Pray, Sir, be ſo good as to tell me, who this Mr. Incognito is, who would ſtrip me of my family unpurchaſed arms; my title;

title; my eſtate; this miſtreſs of my idolatry; and ſtamp me the very outcaſt of fortune?

Col. One, Sir, with whom I fancy, it is neither your wiſh or intereſt to be acquainted.

Sylv. Never heed it, my Lord; imprint but the ſhape of a coronet on your carriage, and we giddy women will leap into it in courſe.

Lord Count. Why faith, Madam, quality has its charms, even equal to genuine ſimplicity, in its undiſſembled nature; and the poor Colonel, can no more in his moſt lofty ſtrain of affectation, pretend to vie with me, than he can relieve Gibraltar, and raiſe the ſiege, by ſending out a fleet of bum-boats.

Col. Indeed, I cannot.—That is a truth as ſacred, as your pretenſions to nobility are falſe. I always heard that Ireland never bred any envenomed animals; but as ſoon as I heard your Lordſhip was a native there, I inſtantaneouſly altered my opinion.

Lord Count. Come, Colonel, you are not commanding officer at preſent, and have no right to be either ſarcaſtic, or imperious: You cannot make us mount a double guard, or bring us to the halberds by the ſentence of a court martial.

Col. Madam, you ſeem like other modiſh ladies, not at leiſure at preſent, to attend to any lecture of truth; but if you nouriſh any hope of bliſs in ſtore, entertain that impoſtor with that heinous contempt the nature of his intention deſerves. [*Exit.*

Lord Count. Allons, Madam, I'll ſacrifice that martial bluſter; nay regulars, guards, militia; aye, even the whiſkered Huſſars from Tranſylvania, to prove myſelf a credit to my peerage. [*Ex.* L. Count. *and* Sylv.

Lucr. Our ſex in general ſeem one emblem of contradiction. Poor Sylvia deſpiſes the old adage, as mouldy and obſolete; for of two evils, according to my ſimple conception of the circumſtance, ſhe chuſeth the greateſt.

Enter

Enter Thriver.

Thriv. Thus the copartner of the firſt of men, embowered in foliage of gay-ſkirted paradiſe, needed not Danae's brazen walls to hold her.

Lucr. Why no, poor woman, ſhe might have ſtaid there time immemorial, quite unmoleſted, 'till doomſday, had not the beguiling tempter ſchemed her ruin.

Thriv. Such a ſerpent, without his ſtimulus and miſchief, has chance thrown in your way; and if I am lucky in this amour, as he in cunning and ſeduction, I ſhall be bleſt in the embraces of the moſt angelic creature in the univerſe.

Lucr. I am amazed, Sir, that love ſhould be your theſis now, when a few hours ſince you was loudly declamatory againſt it.

Thriv. Not in the leaſt, Madam; it was that crabbed-digeſting medicine, vulgarly called wedlock, that challenges my moſt bitter invective; for this is as oppoſite to pure affection, as enthuſiaſm to genuine piety. True love can no more be controuled by a ceremonious liturgy, than draining a man by the launcet, to his laſt ounce of blood, will cure him of a pleureſy.

Lucr. From this you would infer that a woman who admits her gallant to unreſtrained liberties, acts more conſiſtent, and in character, than a woman of worth and virtue. [*Aſide.*] A latitudinarian in principle, and at war with decorum and propriety.

Thriv. I muſt confeſs, Madam, that ſhe is the moſt abandoned harlot, who is legally ſo, through a ſelf-intereſted motive. It is undoubtedly a greater fault and foible, for a woman to proſtitute herſelf, for her whole exiſtence, than for the trivial ſpace of a few poor ſhort-lived minutes.

Lucr. Then, Sir, you demur not, whether modeſty is not a bugbear, and goodneſs nominal; and ſeem to imagine that a wife and wanton, ſtand in the ſame predicament of excellence.

Thriv.

Thriv. Methinks I ſtand in the ſhoes of Shakeſpeare's Hamlet; for ſhe fools me to the top of my bent. [*Aſide.*] An Iriſh adamantine brow muſt now aſſiſt me. Why, theſe are political, prieſtly diſtinctions, often preſcribed by cuſtom and human ſophiſtry. Senſitive affection ſtarted from chaos before creation. It prompts us to ſeek that which is fit and pleaſing; and to be comforted with the fruition of what we ſeek for. Thus nature bids me taſte the cherries on your lips, gaze on thoſe floating Cupids in your eyes, 'till pleaſure grows immortal. [*Embracing her.*]

Lucr. [*Breaking from him.*]—Is this your boaſted love? 'tis vile concupiſcence; a wiſh to gratify a diſordered appetite. Oh! 'tis a barbarous flame, and damns the wretched object of purſuit.

Thriv. True, my fair caſuiſt; and from this repulſe, a chaſte affection in a noble mind ſhews a bright ſemi-blance to me. And the only way that a woman can gain any aſcendance over the reaſonable part of our ſex, is by the preſervation of her own fame and virtue.

Lucr. I cannot ſuppoſe this your undiſſembled opinion, or you are a very nimble apoſtate from your old creed.

Thriv. I am a ſuppliant proſelyte at the altar of modeſty; you have weaned my ſoul from all its roving errors, and ſealed conviction on it.

Lucr. Your errors then given up, have loſt their name. Let me propound a queſtion or two, by the way of ſample. Could you be content to quit the pomps and vanities of this wicked place, and retreat to a lonely caſtle in the country; where, in the lieu of chaunting choriſters in ſtiff bands and white ſurplices, you will be harmonized with lowing of cattle and the matin ſerenade of the lark; to be confined to one woman 'till death does part; and to think there is no enormity in marriage?

Thriv. Could I flatter myſelf that my addreſſing you is no ways diſguſtful, I ſhould ſuppoſe my celibacy the greateſt enormity in nature?

Lucr. Why, you muſt firſt win the old lady's approbation,

bation, or mine is no more than a motion in both the houſes without his majeſty's ſignature. But if you aſſail that redoubt, I give you this innuendo; proceed by ſap, and not by ſcale, or you will quickly be forced to raiſe the ſiege, I'll aſſure you. [*Exit.*

Thriv. A very friendly admonition; and as I conceive, I have hit on a very feaſible project. Well, this love is like neceſſity, for it whets the invention to a miracle; It endows, like wine, the natural dullard with artificial vivacity; it makes the poetic garretteer dream of a new coat and a dinner, and emboldens him to think he is as much entitled to clean linnen, as though he had never been guilty of tagging a ſingle couplet. [*Exeunt.*

END *of the* FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Lady* Lofty's *lodgings.*

Enter Thriver, *dreſſed as a Gownſman.*

Thriv. A VERY plauſible diſguiſe; and as my old friend Naſo will have it, *mutatas dicere formas*; for Daphne is by him ſuppoſed to be turned into a laurel; Lycaon into a wolf; and poor weeping Biblis into a fountain, after the ſame liquid nature; yet, cannot the Ovidian pen, with all its deſcriptive variety, depict any transformation, ſo droll as from a rake to a ſtudent.

Enter Lady Lofty.

Lady Loft. Sir, your moſt obſequious, in the very bathos of fidelity; by the letter you left you are recommended by an Oxonian Provoſt as a man of immenſe erudition, yet of profound taciturnity, as a match for my niece, Lucrecia; and ſhe has conſented to receive you as the emperor of her inclinations, without the tedious form of courtſhip, when a few contingencies

are

are adjuſted?—Therefore, *imprimis*, on what mundane ſyſtem have you fixed the baſis of your ideas? Who is the reigning minion, Ptolemy, Copernicus, or Newton?

Thriv. I expected ſhe wanted to know what jointure I could make; and I cannot tell which queſtion it would be moſt difficult to anſwer. [*Aſide.*]—Why, why,—I—I have it at my tongue's end.

Lady Loft. I ſuppoſe you would ſignify the Newtonian ſyſtem is to be adopted?

Thriv. Certainly the Newtonian ſyſtem.

Lady Loft. Poor gentleman! he is privially impeded in his pronunciation,—an obſtruction in the thorax, vulgarly called a gutturile.

Thriv. [*Aſide.*] This is not her Ladyſhip's caſe; for ſhe has fluency of ſpeech enough for herſelf and me, and every barriſter in the kingdom.

Lady Loft. Alack! I have frequently lamented that I was not an inhabitant of the moon, inſtead of earth; for, as by our philoſophic teleſcopes, we perceive there is no atmoſphere; there is, conſequently, no vegetation; but Providence may create beings of a purified kind, without corporeal organs, that may exiſt independent of food.

Thriv. A very plauſible conjecture! [*Aſide.*] I believe her Ladyſhip was originally a native there, for her diſcourſe ſavours of Bedlam.

Lady Loft. He has a great conjunction of diffidence and literature, and I believe his notions right, for he entirely coincides with my opinion. [*Aſide.*] Do you imagine, Sir, that the diſcovery of our eaſting and weſting, will ever be happily effected, ſince the longitude of a meridian has hitherto puzzled the wiſeſt maſters of geography?

Thriv. I fancy we ſhall find it a hard matter to determine.

Lady Loft. With what a becoming modeſty are the unfathomed ſons of ſcience adorned! What, Sir, may that certain cement be that pervades the whole creation? delineate that, and Lucrece, will I conſecrate your own.

Enter Sir Mark Foible.

Sir Mark. A truce from that quarter. I know cauſe, and juſt impediment, why theſe two ſhould not be joined together in lawful wedlock; *videlicet*, the lady is pre-engaged, to your moſt obedient humble ſervant, Mark Foible.

Thriv. [*Aſide.*] If that puppy ſhould know me in this inky mantle, my whole plan is diſconcerted.

Sir Mark. Why do you think the lady will put up with this ſtuffed alligator's ſkin, when ſhe can have ſuch a diamond of the firſt water, as myſelf? I have travelled for cultivation; have partook of a cold collation with a Lord Mayor, and have danced a Highland jig with the blitheſt laſſie in Scotland.

Lady Loft. I doubt not but you ſparkled like a conſtellation of the firſt magnitude; and by the unmeaning flirts of the age was thought one moving charm.

Sir Mark. I muſt own, my Lady, that I received ſo many compliments on my dancing, that I was rather vain; and at laſt, I made it a rule never to dance with any woman except ſhe was handſome.

Thriv. And ſuppoſe, Sir, the ladies ſhould make it a rule to dance with no man except of poliſhed underſtanding.

Sir Mark. Well, Sir,—what,—what then?—

Thriv. Why, then Sir,—you would never dance at all.

Sir Mark. 'Sblood, Sir,—you are—Ho! ho! why Mr. *Propria quæ maribus*, you are a little out of your element, and have been ſtuffed in a tyring room to act Sir John Falſtaff. [*He moves him round, a ſwathe of foul linen drops, and Exit* Thriver.] Your dutiful, indefatigable vaſſal, ſweet Mr. Thriver.

Lady Loft. Oh! all ye planets, in your fulgid orbs! This a fellow of a college!—he ſhould ſtraitway be apprehended, and made a felon in the caſtle. It was no admiration that a defection of knowledge rendered the creature tongue-tied: I now obſerve that we have as many *pſeudo-literati* palmed upon us for the genuine *erudite*, as ſurely, as I perceive, by the ſtudy of the mathematics,

mathematics, that the hypothenuſe of an angle is ſhorter than the two legs. [*Exit.*

Sir Mark. Very tough knotty language, on the word of a Baronet; quite ſufficient to crack my jaw-bone, with repetition; and if this billet-doux is couched in the ſame riddling terms, I'll commit it to the flames with a vengeance. [*Reads.*] "If you are the perſon "of honour I always apprehended you to be, you "will reſcue me from the thraldom of a mercileſs "aunt; whoſe conceptions extend not beyond the "limits of a duſty folio; a priſm, or a petrified ſhell. "If you have conjugal fortitude, to meet me on the "walks, I ſhall think it not inconſiſtent with prudence "or refinement to reſign my fortune, perſon, or what-"ever elſe I claim, as my own property; and to ac-"company you to the next church or chapel; and "afterwards live with you in the character of,

"Your loving wife LUCRETIA."

"P. S. For the ſake of delicacy, I ſhall inſiſt upon "the ceremony being performed in a veil."

So.—Be married in a veil! this is purchaſing a pig in a poke. But, however, I ſhall be abſolutely certain that I have married nothing but a woman; for no other animal exiſting could poſſibly be ſo confounded whimſical. However, ſhe is a very rare creature, and a few ſcruples and trifling niceties ſhall be allowed for; and then, with compliance of theſe ſweet contents, I ſhall totally get rid of Alice. The wench had the front and infirmity to expect my hand in wedlock! ſhe might as well deſire me to go abroad in ſearch of the Trojan horſe; or to look for the ſcattered remnants of Noah's ark. A ſoft unfortunate idiot, to ſurmiſe I will booze it with the dregs of porter, when I am cordially invited to a new-pierced butt of Rheniſh or Madeira.

Enter Colonel Lovewell.

Have mercy, ſweet Colonel! my tranſports ſurpaſs the maſterſhip of reaſon; and I ſhall grow quite delirious with my raptures.

Col. Prithee, Sir Mark, what is the purport?

Sir Mark. Why, my dear Colonel, I am greater than the Perſian Sophy; more opulent than the fancy of the moſt luxuriant dramatiſt; and happier than the prodigal, who has his old miſerly father, both dead and inteſtate, in his coffin.

Col. So much for the preface, Sir; now for the point in hand.

Sir Mark. What will become of your old chum, Mr. Thriver? I am now about to faſten a knot, that nothing but death, or divorce, can make diſſoluble. I am now, on this ſpot, about to be joined to his rural prim, Lucretia.

Col. In conceit, and deluſive perception.

Sir Mark. There is no fallacious imagination in any part of the matter; if you doubt my veracity, you may read it, deeply imprinted in very legible characters. [*Gives him the note.*] But, Cupid has lent me his plumage, and incites me to wing my expectations; and when the buſineſs is completely finiſhed, I ſhall depend upon the formal compliment of a wedding viſit, from my acquaintance. [*Exit.*

Col. This fellow may be a fop; but, I fear he is not half the fool I took him for. What can be here? I preſume nothing, but a turtle-penned cooing billet-doux. [*Reads.*]

Enter Thriver.

Thriv. 'Sdeath, Colonel! Lucretia finding that the old Lady was bent in joining her with a monaſtic antiquated fellow, in this univerſity, is privately eloped with one maid attendant, and cannot any where be diſcovered.

Col. Her hiding place is not worth your tracing; and I have a ſubſtantial reaſon to confirm it. [*Gives the note.*] If you credit the contents, in the room of bewailing her eſcape, you ſhould ſing *Te Deum*, for your own.

Thriv. Could I for certain credit this affair; and ſome few doubts be ſcattered to the wind, I would make a *chamfetre* on the occaſion. But, I'll wait alone here, and watch their motions: If I ſnuffle matrimony, marrow-

marrow-bones and cleavers ſhall not ſerve their turn; I'll entertain the doating couple, with much more jarring muſic. [*Exit* Col. Lovewell.

Enter Sir Mark Foible, *and* Alice, *veiled.*

Sir Mark. I have both ring and our authority, about me; and the reverend Mr. Orthodox, will be here in a few minutes.

Thriv. One Mr. Hetrodox, anticipates the ceremony, and begs a private interview, and a few ſyllables in utterance. You muſt drain a very decent eylet hole through my body, Sir, before you decamp with that Lady, I proteſt.

Sir Mark. You ſeem to flatter yourſelf, Sir, that ſhe is a very ſevere papiſt, and obliged by the way of a rigid pennance to marry the firſt man who in the public walks, takes the trouble to propound the queſtion.

Thriv. I'm in no temper to be trifled with; and the prelude to my intent ſhall be very brief, and pithy. [*Produces piſtols.*] Here are two pretty compact engines of determination, and which you are inclined to uſe, is entirely left to your choice.

Sir Mark. Why, as for my part, I am for neither one or the other.—Thoſe inſtruments, if, through wantonneſs, or reduction, you are weary of life, will equip you for a road-collector. If I prepare for death, it ſhall not be hand over head; or all on a tilt, like a Dutchman's cock-boat, but with as much deliberation as a barber-ſurgeon extracts a rotten tooth.

Alice. I fear the paltroon will give me up, and I ſhall loſe the comfort of being made an honeſt woman at laſt. [*To Thriver.*] What right have you to lay the leaſt reſtraint on my pleaſure? however, it is in vain; and you may as well attempt to perſuade an alderman to faſting and ſelf-denial at a city-feaſt, as to talk me from my purpoſe. [*Shews herſelf to* Thriv.]

Thriv. [*Softly.*] How ſhall I exclaim! Was it you, that ſent the letter in Lucrece's name?

Alice. No one elſe, I aſſure you.

Thriv.

Thriv. Invention darts through me like the motion of a weaver's ſhuttle. [*To* Sir Mark.] Well, Sir, if ſhe prefers thoſe wire-dancing joints, thoſe punchinello arteries, even to the very diſtant appearance of manhood; let the conſequence of her depraved taſte be to wed with you, and never more be conſoled, with any more uſeful a helpmate. [*Exit.*

Sir Mark. I can hardly keep my temper! It is a provident circumſtance that he is gone.

Alice. In reſpect to yourſelf, I make no doubt but you think ſo.

Sir Mark. If I can prevent it, I hate to fight in the the morning, eſpecially before I have taken my ruſk and chocolate. It is terribly ſhocking to be run thro' the inteſtines, with nothing in them to keep the wind out.

Alice. As to any taſte for tilting, the hour of day is a very immaterial difference, I preſume: I thought you had a mind to ſurrender me, which you ſhould not have done no ſooner than the great Elliot give up Gibraltar when he expected daily ſtores and ſupplies, and the aſſiſtance of a Britiſh admiral.

Sir Mark. No, Madam, it was only a deep laid ſcheme of riddance. I knew that a denial, to riſk my ſweet perſon, would terminate the diſpute; for he had a greater itch to ſpoil me for a huſband, by blowing out my brains, than to enter into the ſtate himſelf. He was traiterouſly inclined, toward the government; for he ſeemed rather reſolved to diminiſh the King's ſubjects, than to add any to the number by wedlock.

Alice. A horrible, bloody fellow! I had ſooner, for my own ſhare, introduce a human creature to a being, than eſtabliſh a laſting peace in Great-Britain by the deſtruction of the four powers we are at war with. [*Exit.*

Enter Lord Counterfeit, *and* Sylvia.

Sylv. Handſomely determined, my Lord! to treat me with a morning's airing on the pleaſure ground of hymen, in the ſtead of a baſket of fruit a trinket for my hair, or any other inconſiderable bauble. Why,

we

we ſhall be the talk of every publick hall, the ſneer of the buttery; and the theme of every coffee-houſe. My Lady Lofty has calculated your nativity, who plainly perceives if you die in a nooſe, it will never be a matrimonial one.

Lord Count. Pſhaw, child! people of her judicial pretenſions are wholly ignorant of the matter: I am one of thoſe Iriſh peers, that ſit in the Houſe of Lords; and that is a place of more renown, than Aries, Taurus, Gemini, or any other imaginary houſe in the wide regions of aſtronomy.

Enter Colonel Lovewell.

Sylv. A very odd occurrence, Colonel! half jeſt, half earneſt. I made a random flighty promiſe to marry his Lordſhip this morning. Are promiſes, according to the proverb, like pie-cruſt, may we break them, as a drunken rake, or bully, does the windows of a ſober citizen; or are they inviolably to be preſerved?

Col. It depends, Madam, from whom they come! a courtier, and a woman, imagine they have a right to a breach of them; for though no law confirms it in their favour, yet, they ground their privilege on what the gentlemen of the long robe, ſtile cuſtom immemorial.

Sylv. I am ſorry, Colonel, you waver from the point; when my bliſs or unhappineſs depend on the monoſyllables Yes, or No, the ſituation is ſo critical that it is barbarous to deny me your advice.

Col. You ſeem to treat this important affair with a capital degree of levity; if you imprudently join iſſue with that tricking ape of nobility, your fortune will be ſquandered, your perſon mal-treated, and you will be neceſſitated to cultivate potatoes on the ſoil of Hibernia for your ſupport.

Sylv. Ha, ha, ha! I am like the reſt of my ſex; am determined how to proceed, before I apply for counſel. With a large independent fortune, and a man of his Lordſhip's œconomy, where is the chance of failure?

Col.

Col. You are only now on the margin of ruin; if you leap from the ſummit, all then is irretrievable.

Sylv. I am ſo highly pleaſed with, and ſo comfortably hug myſelf on the truth of the claim of Lord Counterfeit, that was he even diveſted of his honours, and a private centinel, I would partake of his lot, and carry the knapſack with delight.

Lord Count. Oh, Madam, reciprocal feelings and a trivial modicum of the world, will keep alive the embers of comfort.

Sylv. Moſt truly ſaid;—and, if there is any thing real in this allegation, ingenuouſly acknowledge the matter; and, if you have not the ingredients you ſpecified, it will not alter, but ſtrengthen my preſent ſentiments of you.

Lord Count. Then, Madam, I am like a medlar in the height of winter, rotten ripe, and will confeſs it: I am a broken linen-draper, live upon my remaining ſtock in trade, and have broke in upon my laſt cool hundred. My aſſumed rank is falſe as a gambler's oath; but my love is as true as Pylades to his friend.

Sylv. Very brief and argumentative; and in the lieu of changing it, corroborates the ſentiments I always entertained of you; ſo dwell no longer on the topic.—You are a ſharper.

Col. I am rivetted to the floor with amazement.

Lord Count. Prodigies ſeem more abundant now, than in the dark ſuperſtitious reign of the firſt James.

Sylv. I have ſeen through the poor diſguiſe, of this artful ſnare, and have fiſhed for a verbal acknowledgment: I have two officers of juſtice to evidence your confeſſion.—Enter, and ſeize upon this impoſtor, and let the law deal with him in proportion to his flagrant demerits. [*Enter* Servants, *who ſeize him.*

Lord Count. My proprietors have fitted me out for a trading voyage, and I am likely to return with a very rich cargo. If I ever taſte the luſcious fruits of fortune-hunting again, may they drain me with the bloody flux. [*Exit.*

Sylv. And now, Sir, as you are my ambling gallant, and

and have followed me as conſtantly as vultures hover over a human carcaſe, I am about to pronounce your ſentence, and warn you to prepare for the worſt.—To gratify my inſatiate revenge, I am ready, if you will walk a little farther, to enter the liſts with you in conſecrated ground; and live with you, 'till you are tired of my company. [*Exit.*

Col. A very fair challenge, by the foot of Pharaoh; and I'll give her the ſatisfaction of a gentleman. The politicians talk of laying a tax on old maids: It would be very grievous, indeed; it ſhould be laid on us; for if they live ſingle, paſt their prime, it is the fault of the maſculine gender. [*Exit.*

SCENE, *Lady* Lofty's ——.

Enter Thriver *and* Lucrece.

Lucr. A very ſpirited epiſtle from Mrs. Alice to the fop. But who ſhould think that a diſtant relation, a ſupercargo at the factory at China, ſhould have left me fifteen thouſand pounds; I knew nothing of it till within an ace of being married; without which, I never would have conſented; as I could not ever think of rendering a man wretched whom I thought worthy of a huſband.

Thriv. A moſt delightful moraliſt! I have juſt now received an account of my father's demiſe, and my inheritance of the family eſtate; for matrimony is but a dry morſel, without the ſauce of plenty to make it go down.—But, by this time, poor Sir Mark is ſmugly nabbed: If we ſtep behind this ſcreen, ſome incidents may occur that perchance may yield us diverſion.—[*They retire.*]

Enter Lady Lofty.

Lady Loſty. The more I contemplate the properties of light, the more I am inveloped in confuſion. Are its particles originally ſplendid, or only ſo when collected and put in motion by ſome other body? whether it gravitates or attracts, is another inſearchable criterion?

criterion? Is it a repellant, and that of the greateſt nature: if ſo, by what method doth it communicate the act of repulſion, to any other body?

Thriv. [*Aſide.*] I am exempt from the knowledge of this, as butchers are excluded from a jury.

Lady Lofty. The amazing velocity of ſounds! fourteen miles in a moment.

Enter Sir Mark Foible, *and* Alice *veiled.*

Sir Mark. We have not been quite ſo nimble as that, though very expeditious in the buſineſs: I have given your priſoner a *habeas corpus* to the goal of hymen, and ſhe has put on very pleaſing fetters, which, till death, gives her an act of grace ſhe is not likely to be rid of.

Lady Lofty. She has repented then: her veiled appearance ſhews ſhe is quite aſhamed of it. Oh! had her affections been frozen, like tardy Bootes; or her ſpirit extracted in an air pump: I ſhall ſurely hate the whole race of man, and platonically marry my mind to the whole ſeven ſciences.

Alice. Sir Mark is only as good as his word, for he promiſed me marriage before he was ſo raſh as to deflower me.

Sir Mark. Furies and lightnings!

Lady Lofty. Who have we here? the landlord's daughter at the Plume of Feathers, where I put up the firſt night I came to Cambridge: out of reſpect to aſtronomy, I ſhould have put up at the Sun or Star: It was a very great overſight indeed.

Sir Mark. I am condemned, and ſhall be executed, beyond redemption.—It is hard that a man cannot be wet by chance, without ſtanding for life under the drain of a Scyphon. I have drove my cattle to a very proſperous mart; having gallanted, fooled, and coquetted with every fine woman of repute, I am at laſt wedded to wind up the cataſtrophe, to the muddy grounds of a tap-tub.—If you ever acknowledge me as your wedded huſband, I will grind your bones, as fine as a chandler grinds his oatmeal,

Alice.

Alice. I plainly perceive we are likely to live like people of the firſt-rate quality and circumſtance; for we quarrel, and cut throats, before conſummation.

Lady Lofty. You would be unlawfully meddling, and ſhe has tricked you into juſtice; and you as ſurely deſerve it, as that the tangent of an angle touches the periphery of a circle.

Enter Thriver *and* Lucrece.

Thriv. Madam, I cry your Mercy.

Lady Lofty. I have had no litigation with you, Sir, and therefore, can ſee no reaſon why you ſhould ſue me for mercy.

Thriv. I have married this Lady, and hope not to vilify you by my alliance.

Luc. To prevent my being ſacrificed, to that collegiate folio of crabbed jargon, and obſolete rhapſody: I hope you will remit the offence, of taking ſhelter in the arms of the only man I love.

Lady Lofty. Is this your lover's leap? It tallies with romance, from the pan directly into the fire. This comes of the contempt of philoſophy: You will ſoon find the old adage true; when poverty enters the door, affection flies out of the window.

Thriv. Highly improbable! Your Ladyſhip muſt have heard of ſome thouſands left my wife by the death of an India ſupercargo.

Sir Mark. Which, in room of being my own, I have got a female retailer of barley, hops, and fermentation; but I ſhall have a concert finger into keeping, and turn this lawful ſpouſe of mine to ſcore at the tavern bar.

Alice. And I ſhall put up ſuch a plaguy long one on your account, that you will grudge to diſcharge the reckoning.

Sir Mark. Thou very mirror of aggravation! thou paragon of vixens! by the way of puniſhment, I'll hie me back to college, and never come out of the inner quadrangle for a twelvemonth.

Alice. And I'll take up my abode in the ſame place;

place; and you need no greater punishment than that, depend upon it.

Luc. Poor Sir Mark! his university education has undoubtedly been attended with a very considerable expence. *Exit.*

Enter Colonel Lovewell, *and* Sylvia.

Thriv. Oh! Madam, here is another delinquent in the school of matrimony; sweet Sylvia having secured, for penal law, her pretended nobleman, has, having long a secret penchant for my friend, rewarded his faithful unremitted services, and requited his love with herself and all belonging.

Lady Lofty. What mathematician could raise a perpendicular, from a given line like this? they say, the great Newton never knew the force of love, or felt the impression in his mind of any beautiful woman.

Luc. But like some modern, capricious ladies, took the altitude of towers and steeples, with his quadrant.

Thriv. My dear, you are satirical; it is the rock her Ladyship has split on; but her vessel is not so far stranded, but it yet may right, and be fit for service.

Col. Aye! and as my friend, Madam, is now as well as myself possessed of a fair hereditary fortune, with all appurtenance of birth and reputation—your niece and daughter are luckily settled, the one having escaped the embraces of a sharper, and the other of an artificial fool: Let us all petition your giving us both blessing and forgiveness; and shake off the philosopher, astronomer, mathematician, prophetess, and caster of nativities; nor, like the rash boy of Apollo, attempt to move in a sphere that nature never designed you for. Your collected cabinet of curiosities give to the virtuosi of the other sex, or to some public repository, for the same; and never think of irradiating any other orbit than that which is peculiar to woman.

Lady Lofty. I have been read, by several friends, lectures upon lectures on such my impropriety of conduct, and ultimately feel the poignant force of conviction.

Thriv.

Thriv. Your Ladyſhip, ſhews your underſtanding, now as directed to a proper purport. Wiſe People, they ſay, with circumſtances, change their minds; but fools, never.

Lady Lofty. Why, people indubitably are loaded with groſs impoſitions, when they meddle with buſineſs peculiar to others; domeſtic duties are the concerns of ours, and not Semi-ſecants, or equilateral triangles: and, inſtead of troubling my head with elaſticity or conic ſections, I ſhould examine the cookery book for the beſt receipt for a pudding. Being myſelf a proſelyte to the common maxims that adorn my ſex, I ſincerely unite your hands, and wiſh you joy: I'll now leave theſe walls of male erudition, which were originally intended as oppoſite to my caſt of ſtudy, as the Zenith is to the Nadir, and retire to my ſnug box in the rural village, and ſuperintend the œconomy of my ſervants. [*Exit.*

Sylv. The moſt prudent reſolution her Ladyſhip ever formed. Prithee, couſin, has not wedlock altered my complexion?

Lucr. Yes, it has; for there is not a feature in your countenance, but what is very richly improved.

Sylv. I do not know whether wedlock may improve our beauty, but I find it improves our complaiſance.

Thriv. Now, my Lucrecia, my bliſs is not only due to thee, but the exquiſite ſenſe and enjoyment of it. I regarded a connubial attachment, which is the regenerate birth of ecſtacy, as the very ſepulchre of it. I fancied no endearments in the ſex, but what were groſs and corporeal; and early thought they would nauſeate by a familiar indulgence: I conſidered it a taſteleſs inſipid ſituation to be always connected with a ſurfeit: but now, I have diſcovered thoſe perpetual charms of the underſtanding which convince me tho' juvenile attractions may quickly fade, that virtue never will. [*Exit.*

THE END.

EPILOGUE.

NO station's enviable less than theirs
Who make the public voice their constant cares;
For few that write for the precarious stage,
Have parts to hit the universal rage;
Or give, tho' echo'd by a fame so loud,
A lasting satisfaction to the croud.
Hard then's the lot of those that stand and fall
Just as they do, or do not please you all:
Since aught on earth can their endeavours crown,
Unless they gain the sanction of the Town;
From whence renown, and lucre we must trace,
That gen'ral patron of poetic race.
This being then the case, 'tis time to see
How Howe stands, our Bard cries out, th' account with me:
If his brisk Muse responsive to desires,
Or is she pale with ineffectual fires. *
How goes he on in this dramatic strife?
Are all his scenes drawn forth from real life?
Or does frail nature disobey commands;
Nor own the daubings of a bungler's hands?
However he meets applause, be this confest,
His conscious mind, declares he did his best;—
And when o'er various passages you're gone,
If for his faults some beauties may atone.
If in the handling of theatric theme
The transient rays of genius chance to beam,
Giving some friendly items you approve,
That justice yield, for which so long he strove.

* Hamlet.

FINIS.